FIFTY-THIRD
ANNUAL REPORT

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

SAN FRANCISCO
1908

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

Library and Reading and Chess Room

99 Grove Street, corner of Polk Street

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

The Mechanics'-Mercantile Library was re-established at the above address shortly after the general conflagration of 1906—it contains already over 26,000 volumes and is being rapidly increased.

It is the purpose of the Management to bring the Library to its former efficiency as soon as possible.

The Reading Room list of periodicals embraces the title of over 500 newspapers, magazines, reviews and journals.

Members may withdraw two books at a time and extra books on payment of five cents each.

Books (except new fiction) may be retained for two weeks and then renewed for two weeks longer.

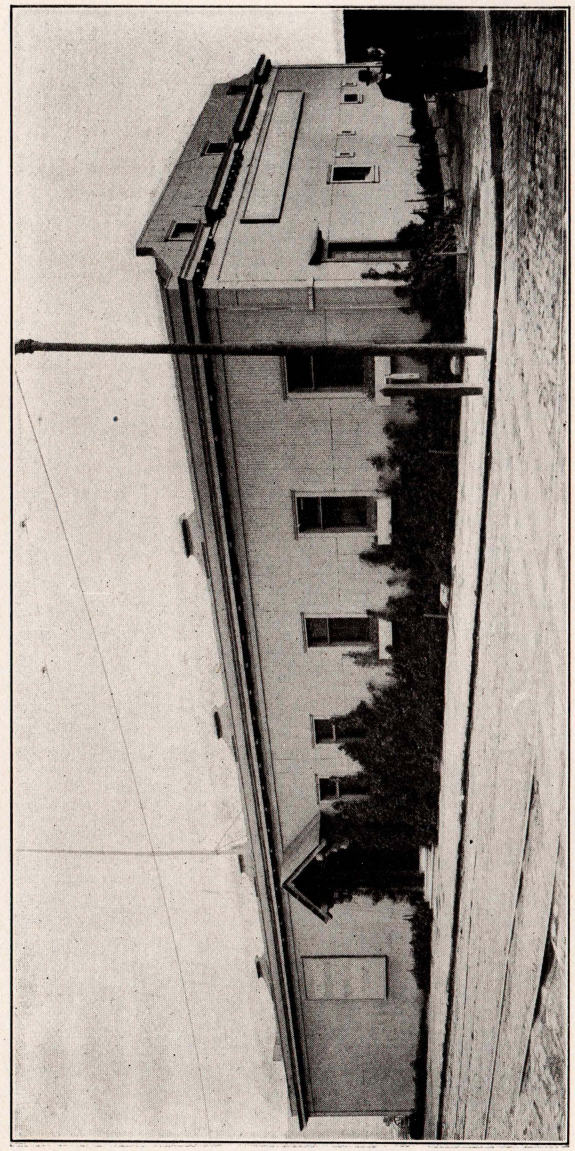
New fiction can be kept out one week and can not be renewed.

TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP

Entrance Fee	$ 1.00
Quarterly Dues (in advance)	1.50
Life Membership	50.00

Library open, 9 a. m. to 9 p. m.

Sundays and Holidays, 11 a. m. to 5 p. m.



PRESENT LIBRARY BUILDING, SOUTHEAST CORNER OF GROVE AND POLK STREETS. OPENED AUGUST, 1906.

FIFTY-THIRD ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

FOR THE

YEAR ENDING FEBRUARY 29, 1908

SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.
1908

OFFICERS

BOARD OF TRUSTEES.

Year ending February 29, 1908.

L. R. MEAD . . . . . President

LIVINGSTON JENKS . . . . . Vice President

JAMES G. SPAULDING . . . . Recording Secretary

JAMES H. LYONS . . . . Corresponding Secretary

GEORGE BEANSTON	TIREY L. FORD
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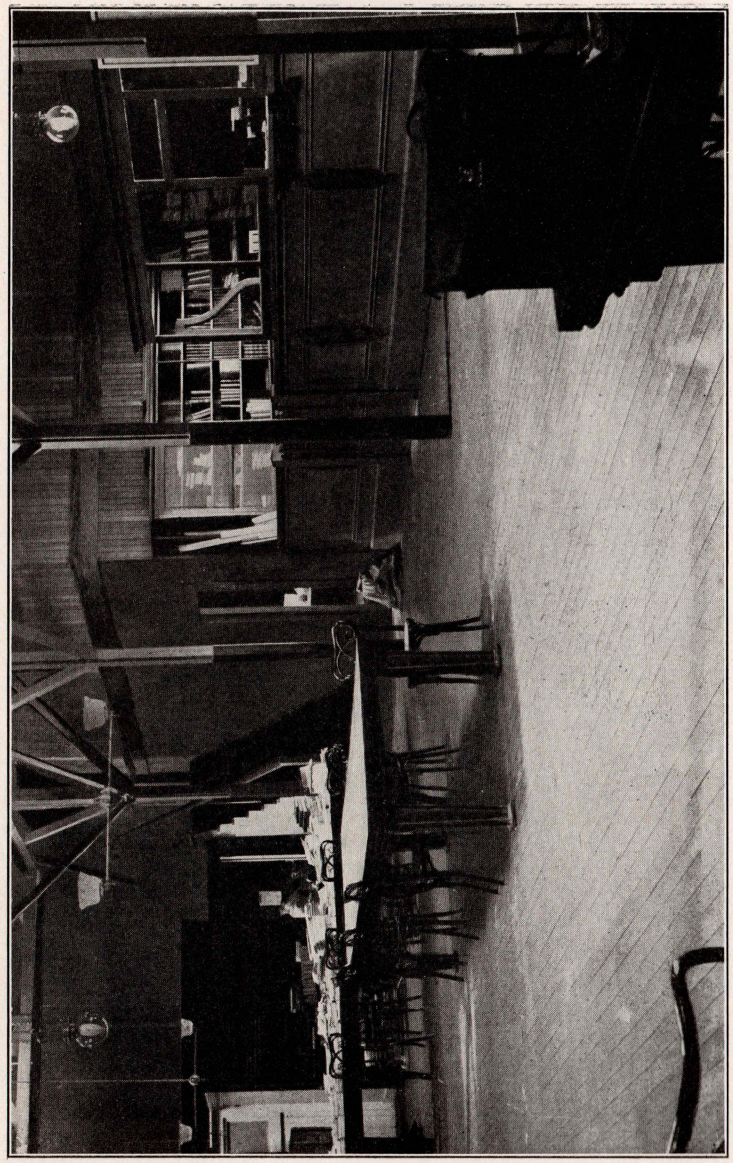
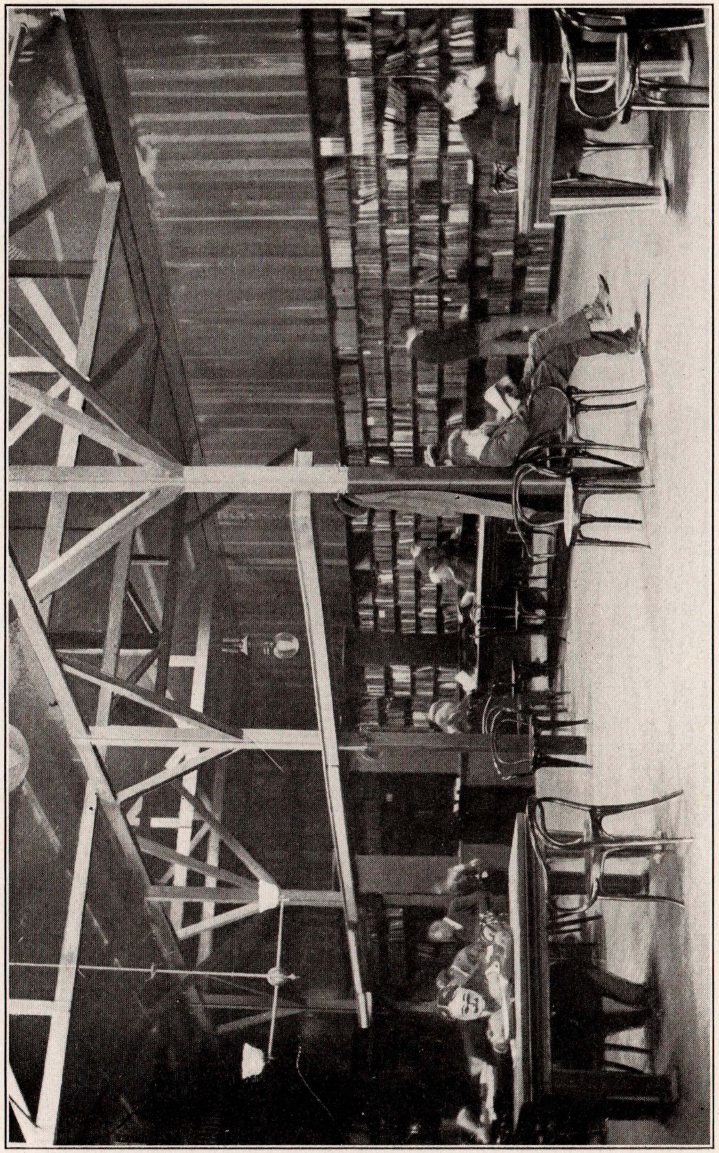
ROBERT W. NEAL	DR. A. W. SCOTT
JAMES SPIERS	RUDOLPH J. TAUSSIG
OTTO VON GELDERN	LUTHER WAGONER

JOSEPH M. CUMMING . . . . . Secretary

FRANCIS B. GRAVES . . . . . Librarian



INTERIOR VIEW, PRESENT LIBRARY BUILDING.



INTERIOR VIEW, PRESENT LIBRARY BUILDING.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

San Francisco, March 5, 1908.

To the Members of the Mechanics' Institute:

I have the honor to submit to you my second annual report as President of the Mechanics' Institute.

One year ago I pointed out to you that the great fire of 1906 had destroyed the entire library of the Institute, as well as its buildings, and had deprived it of all sources of income except the members' dues, which are and have been for many years much less than the amount necessary to maintain the Institute.

As soon as possible after the fire the present Library Building was erected and the accumulation of a library begun. The past year 6,300 volumes were added and we now have a library of nearly 25,000 volumes; our membership the past year has dropped off about 600, chiefly on account of our inconvenient location, but when we are installed in a better location there is little doubt that we will speedily regain what we have lost. We are still without income except from members' dues, interest on money in bank, and $30.00 a month from lot on San Bruno Avenue, which has just been leased for five years.

The Institute owns the Post-street lot on which the Library formerly stood; the entire block bounded by Hayes, Larkin, Grove and Polk streets, on part of which our present building stands, and which is generally known as the Pavilion Block; some outlying lots, and about $42,000 cash, and there is no encumbrance on any of the property.

During the past year the cash on hand was reduced about $12,000, which is a little more than the amount expended for books, bindings and periodicals. At this rate we have enough cash to run about three years, but it is manifest that it would be unwise to run on as we now are without making some attempt to obtain a revenue to maintain the Institute properly.

There are two possible sources of revenue to look to—the Pavilion Block and the Post-street lot. We hope to lease the Pavilion Block, and a proposition is now under

consideration for a long lease which, if consummated, will help to solve the problem materially. If it is not consummated, your Trustees will use their best endeavors to find another tenant for it.

There is a general demand from our members for us to come down town, and our Post-street lot seems to be in as good a location for our Library as could be desired; that neighborhood is one of the best built up sections in town, and I have no doubt a very good revenue from stores and offices could be obtained from a building on that lot. Building is much cheaper now and your Trustees are of the opinion that we should proceed at once to the erection of a class A building for stores, offices and for the Library. Preliminary plans are now being drawn and in a short while your Trustees will ask for authority to mortgage our property to raise funds to erect the building.

The problem of how to house our Library properly in the new building, without taking too much of the space required for revenue, will require considerable study, and in this connection I would call attention to our Chess Room. The Chess Room affords a great deal of pleasure to some of our members, but it takes up a large portion of valuable space and the number of members using it is comparatively small; I think it would be well to consider abolishing it and using the space for the Library proper.

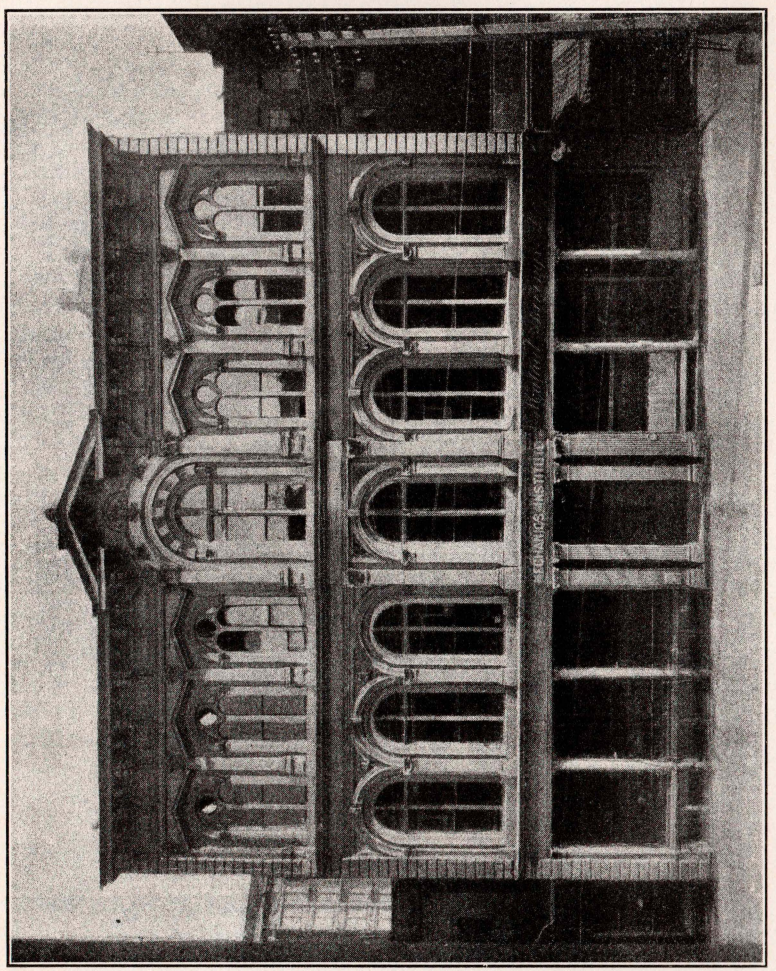
Our usual course of lectures was delivered this season by Professor Stephens with the same gratifying result as in former years.

The hours for keeping the Library open have been extended from 6 P. M. to 9 P. M.

Our Librarian, Frederick J. Teggart, resigned after nine years' service, to become Curator of the Bancroft Collection at the State University, and his successor was appointed in the person of Francis B. Graves, Librarian of the Alameda Public Library, and formerly employed in this Library for many years.

I have to report the death of Col. C. L. Taylor, a member of the Institute since its organization, and one of the Board of Trustees in 1856-7 at the time of the first Mechanics' Fair.

This evening marks the close of my term as President, and also terminates eight years' service on the Board of Trustees, and it may be of interest to review briefly some of the happenings of that time.



LIBRARY BUILDING, 31 POST STREET. ERECTED 1866. DESTROYED BY FIRE APRIL 18, 1906.

Eight years ago the Institute was heavily in debt; it owned the large lot at Sixteenth and Folsom streets, which was draining us for interest on the money borrowed to pay for it; the Pavilion Block was not producing any revenue to speak of, and the Mechanics' Fairs, so successful in the past, seemed to have had their day as revenue producers, so that for the first year or two of this time the Institute had to borrow money for running expenses.

In 1902 the Trustees sold the Folsom-street lot and applied the proceeds to the mortgage, thereby making a large reduction in the interest charges; by careful management on the part of the Pavilion Committee the revenues from the Pavilion Block were gradually increased; the membership, which for a few years had been stationary, began to grow and a few years before the fire the Trustees began to set aside some of the revenues for a sinking fund, which at the time of the fire amounted to over $6,000.

Just previous to the fire of April, 1906, the Institute had taken over the entire Mercantile Library, and the combined Libraries made one of the greatest subscription Libraries in the United States. In March, 1906, the Trustees concluded a highly advantageous lease of the Pavilion, which would have made the block net us nearly $20,000 a year, and plans were being made to put substantial improvements on part of the Hayes-street frontage, so that at the time of the fire of April, 1906, the Institute was in the most prosperous condition it had been in for a number of years.

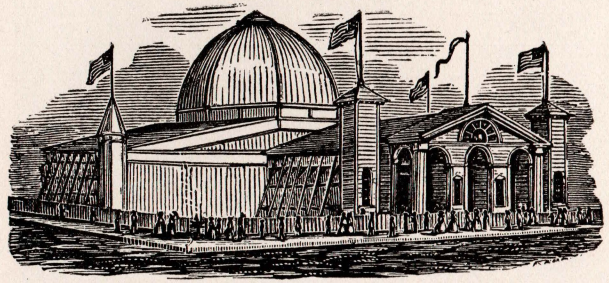
Having suffered our share in the great catastrophe, let us share in the energy and hope that is rebuilding our city on a greater scale than ever. I have faith in this institution and in its mission, and with the conscientious work of the Trustees, aided by the loyalty of our members, I believe the Mechanics' Institute is destined to play even a greater part in the future of this city than it has in the past.

There is one matter that I have refrained from speaking of before, but which, in view of my retirement from the Board, will not, I hope, be considered amiss, and that is the unfriendly criticism with which the Trustees are assailed so often at our quarterly meetings. Your Trustees give a great deal of conscientious thought to the welfare of the Institute without any other hope of reward than the satisfaction of doing a public good; but I assure you that it is

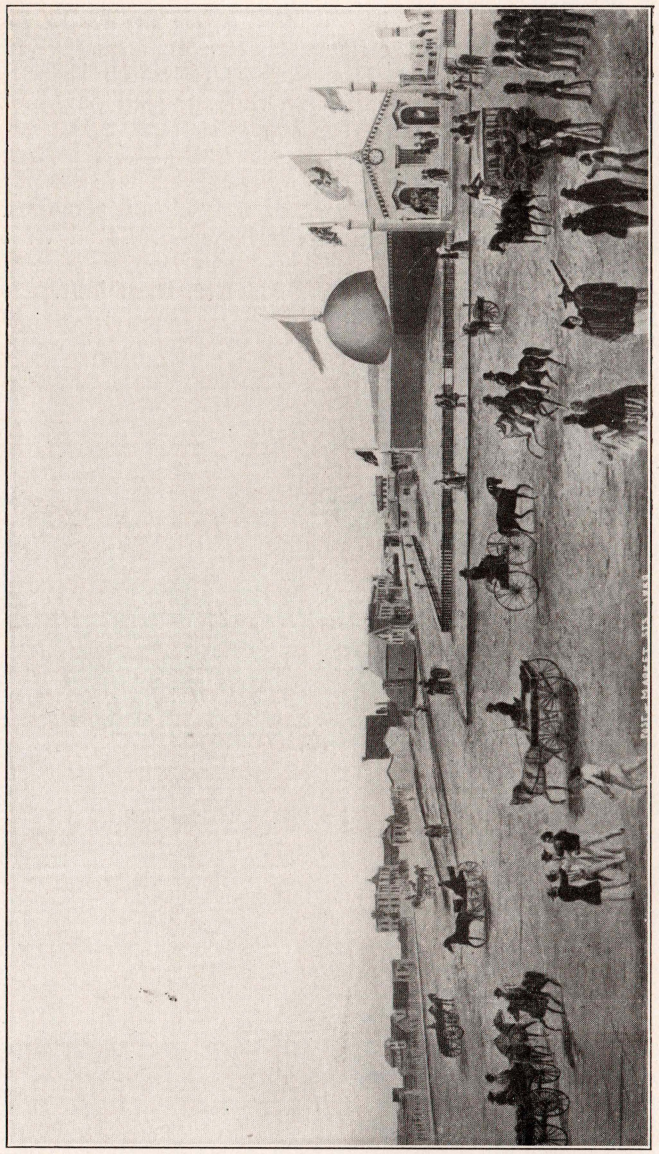
by no means pleasant to be assailed with innuendo as well as by defamation, as we have so often been compelled to listen to at our members' meetings, and which is generally confined to a few members with supposed personal grievances or extreme ideas.

In conclusion, I beg to state that I shall always regard with pleasure my term as a Trustee and I wish to testify to my appreciation of the services of my fellow Trustees, and to express my pleasure in having been affiliated with them.

L. R. MEAD, President.



THIRD MECHANICS' INSTITUTE PAVILION, UNION SQUARE. ERECTED 1864; TORN DOWN 1865.



FIRST MECHANICS' INSTITUTE PAVILION, WEST SIDE OF MONTGOMERY, BETWEEN POST AND SUTTER STREETS; ERECTED 1857. SECOND PAVILION, ERECTED 1860, AT SOUTHWEST CORNER OF MONTGOMERY AND SUTTER STREETS, ADJOINING SITE OF FIRST PAVILION.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

San Francisco, March 1, 1908.

Board of Trustees, Mechanics' Institute:

Gentlemen—I have the honor to present herewith financial statement of the Mechanics' Institute for the year ending February 29, 1908.

March 1, 1907—Cash on deposit in various banks.....$ 54,514.61

RECEIPTS.

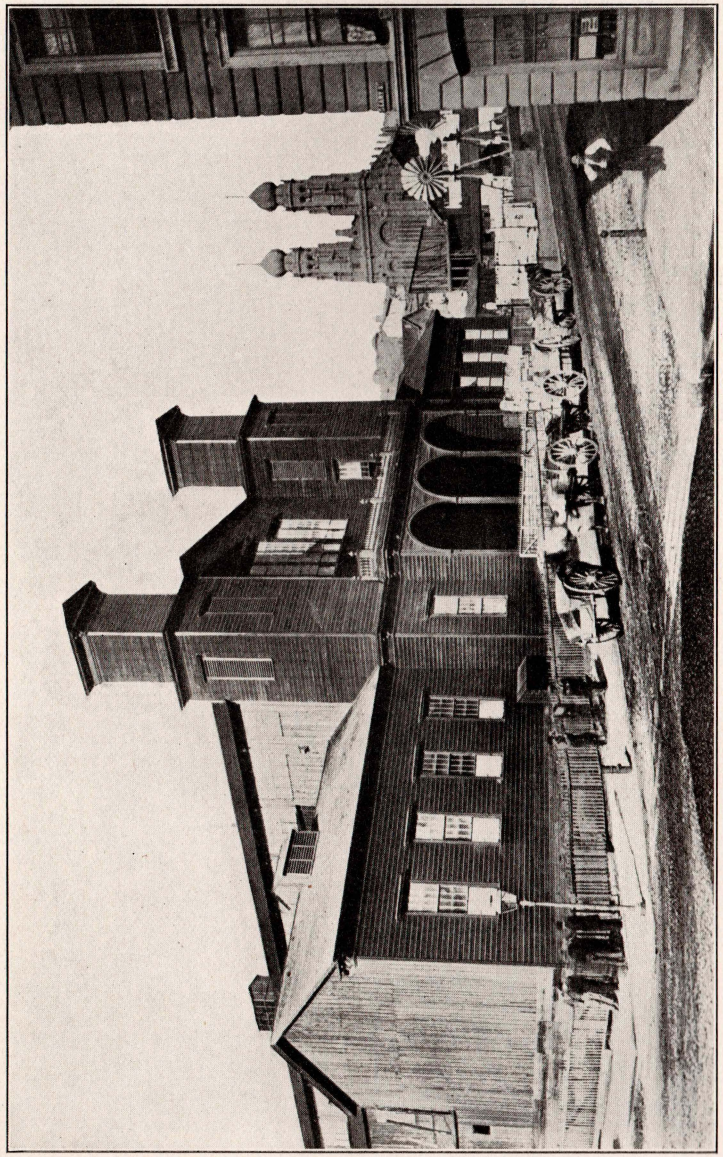
Insurance		$ 3,877.00	
Sale of bricks		799.00	
Interest		1,945.35	
Rents		60.00	
Sundry receipts		74.30	
From Institute members:			
Life memberships	$ 100.00		
Entrance fees	521.00		
Dues	10,437.00		
Fines	375.75		
Extra books	484.20		
Books paid for	83.36		
		12,001.31	
			18,756.96
			$ 73,271.57

EXPENDITURES.

Advertising	$ 14.00
Books, binding, and periodicals	11,775.44
Building—	
Improvements to Library Building	429.05
Expense—	
Janitor's supplies, telephone, small repairs, cartage, hardware, towel supply, etc.	817.79
Fuel	252.50

Furniture—		
Shelving, catalogue cases, etc.		$ 1,054.10
Insurance		1,158.00
Lectures—		
Fees, hall rent, printing		661.50
Light		409.32
Old accounts (incurred prior to April 18, 1906)		94.17
Printing, stationery, and postage		1,104.15
Rent—		
Commission for leasing land		30.00
Salaries		9,618.49
Taxes—		
One-half of annual taxes		3,124.80
Water		120.45
Contingent fund—		
Secretary	$100.00	
Librarian	25.00	
		125.00
		$ 30,788.76
1908—March 1, cash on hand, deposited in various banks		$ 42,482.81

The total insurance carried at the time of the fire, April 18, 1906, was		$129,995.00
Of this there was collected up to March 1, 1907	$102,385.98	
This year there has been collected	3,877.00	
Besides two shares of The Fireman's Fund, worth about	300.00	
From companies in liquidation there will be received about	700.00	
		$107,262.98
In addition the Institute has a suit pending against the Williamsburg City Insurance Company for		$ 4,000.00
The following are total amounts expended to date for—		
Books and periodicals		$ 31,883.74
Furniture and shelving		5,064.86
Library Building		6,645.32



FOURTH MECHANICS' INSTITUTE PAVILION, UNION SQUARE. ERECTED 1868; TORN DOWN 1871.

Insurance is carried as follows:

Books	$ 17,000.00
Furniture	2,000.00
Library Building	4,000.00
	$ 23,000.00

The real estate owned is as follows:

Pavilion Block (bounded by Larkin, Grove, Polk, and Hayes streets, vacant except space occupied by Library Building).

Post-street property (former Library site, vacant).

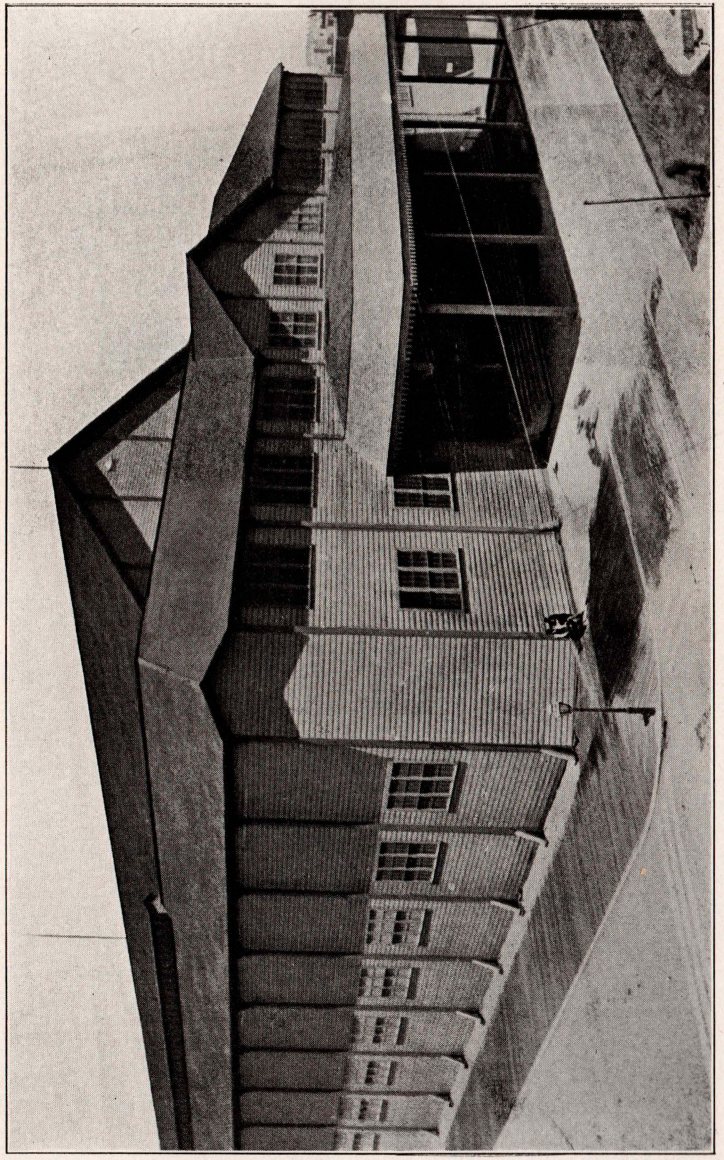
Lots 338 and 339, Precita Valley lands (leased for $30 a month).

Seven lots in People's Homestead Tract A (vacant).

There is no mortgage on any of this property and the Institute has no debts except for current bills.

Respectfully submitted,

JOSEPH M. CUMMING,
Secretary Mechanics' Institute.



FIFTH MECHANICS' INSTITUTE PAVILION, EAST SIDE OF EIGHTH STREET, FROM MARKET TO MISSION. ERECTED 1874; TORN DOWN 1881.

LIBRARIAN'S REPORT

San Francisco, March 3, 1908.

The President and Board of Trustees, Mechanics' Institute:

Gentlemen—I have the honor to submit the annual report of the Library for the year ending February 29, 1908:

MEMBERSHIP.

Total membership March 1, 1907		3,377
New members (Subscribing)		521
New members (Life)		2
		3,900
Resignations and cancellations		1,137
Total membership March 1, 1908		2,763

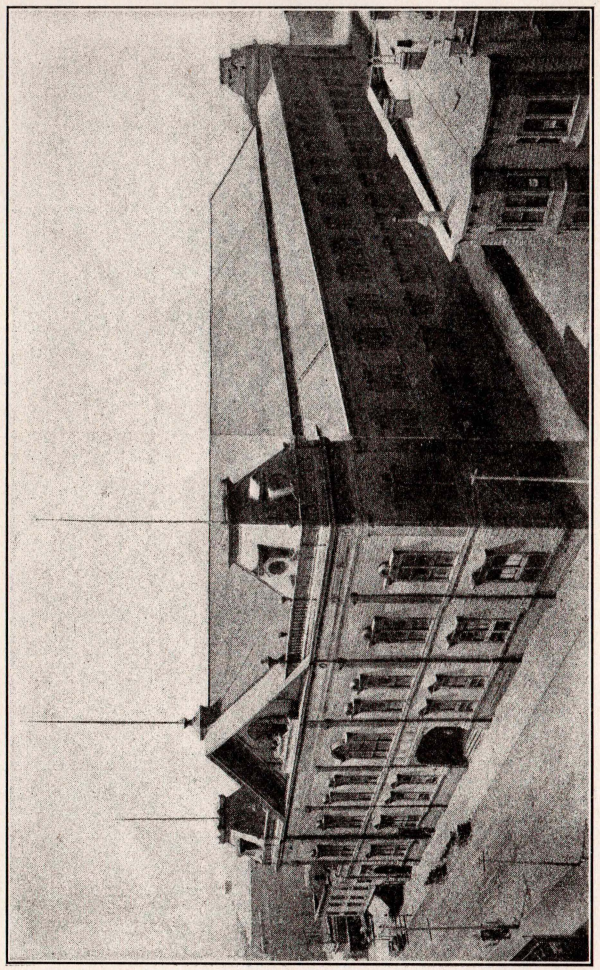
Honorary members	9
Life members	634
Subscribing members	2,120
	2,763

ACCESSIONS.

Total number of volumes March 1, 1907		17,850
Added by purchase	5,038	
Added by gift	1,265	
Added by exchange	65	
	6,368	
Less books lost and paid for	39	
Net gain		6,329
Total accessioned to February 29, 1908		24,179

Of the volumes added, 4,429 were miscellaneous, and 1,929 fiction.

In addition to these there are about 2,500 volumes which have not been entered on the register; many of these are duplicates and are held for exchange purposes.



SIXTH MECHANICS' INSTITUTE PAVILION, ON BLOCK BOUNDED BY LARKIN, GROVE, POLK, AND HAYES STREETS. ERECTED 1882; DESTROYED BY FIRE APRIL 18, 1906.

GIFTS.

In addition to the gifts of the U. S. Government, special mention is here made of institutions and persons who have also sent gifts to the Library: The Alameda Public Library, American Institute of Architects, American Society for Testing Materials, The John Crerar Library of Chicago, The New York Public Library, The Royal Society of London, Mr. R. E. Cowan, Mr. Horace Davis, Mrs. C. M. de Gruchy, Dr. W. F. McNutt, Mrs. J. A. Margo, J. M. Swank, Mrs. C. A. Worth.

MEDICAL LIBRARY.

In July, 1907, the County Medical Society paid for 100 memberships in this Library, and have since then kept their collection of books and current periodicals in our building. This Society has now about 3,200 bound volumes in its collection, which are accessible to the members of the Mechanics' Institute for reference purposes.

RECEIPTS.

From membership fees	$ 521.00
Dues	10,437.00
Life memberships	100.00
Books paid for	83.36
Fines	375.75
Extra books	484.20
Total	$12,001.31

CIRCULATION.

The statistics of circulation for the past four months are as follows:

	Totals.	Average.	Highest.
November	7,497	249	431
December	7,136	236	405
January	7,625	252	465
February	7,311	282	414

Respectfully submitted,

F. B. GRAVES,
Librarian.